

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/050,541	CHIDA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Lynda Jasmin	3627	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to November 12, 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-23.
3. The drawings filed on 18 January 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
 Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Scott Elchert on March 18, 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 24-30 have been cancelled.

In claim 1, line 1, the phrase --for generating a sealed-bid auction-- has been added after the term "method".

In claim 11, line 1, the phrase --for generating a sealed-bid auction-- has been added after the term "method".

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art, Rossides discloses a communication system using bets (CSUB) where the CSUB can enable users to place and accept bets secretly. The CSUB can include an option button for designating that a bet offer and struck bet are to be kept secret, non-displayed to the public that is. An Acceptor then must be authorized (have a PIN given by the Placer). The option to have a bet be kept secret can be a useful feature because a bidder may not want others to know about his bet. Public knowledge of the bet may affect the outcome or have some other cost. For example, if

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a lawyer, say Beth, makes a public bet about the guilt of her client, then that can affect the defense of the client. But, if the bet is secret that may enable Beth to still state an opinion through the CSUB such that the opinion is recorded to be part of her UR, and such that it can be displayed to selected people authorized by Beth. It is clear from the description of Rossides' invention that the prior art does not consider the possibility of "where first quantitative competition apparatus: extracts, for a given value V_w equal to or larger than said lower-limit value V₁ and equal to or smaller than said upper-limit value,
those elements s_{i,w} of said M-element sequences of information s_i sent from said all user apparatuses which correspond to w; and generates an element concatenation Seq_{s,w}=s_{1,w}||s_{2,w}||...||s_{N,w} in which said extracted elements s_{i,w} are arranged in a predetermined order, said || representing the concatenation of data, and where second quantitative competition apparatus: extracts, for said given value V_w, those elements t_{i,w} of said M-element sequences of information t_i sent from said all user apparatuses which correspond to said value w; and generates an element concatenation Seq_{t,w}=t_{1,w}||t_{2,w}||...||t_{N,w} in which said extracted elements t_{i,w} are arranged in a predetermined order in combination with allowing each user to identify user j who committed the minimum/maximum intended value V_{MIN} / V_{MAX} by finding j which satisfies s_{j,MIN}≠t_{j,MIN} / s_{j,MAX}≠t_{j,MAX} of the corresponding elements in said element concatenations Seq_{s,MIN} and Seq_{t,MIN} / Seq_{s,MAX} and Seq_{t,MAX}" as recited in both independent claims 1 and 11.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. Other prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kobayashi et al. "Efficient Sealed-Bid Auction by Using One-Way Functions" discloses determining a winner and a winning price where the bidder who bids the maximum or minimum price among all bidders is the winner and his bidding price is the winning price.

Le et al. "A Public Key Extension to the Common Cryptographic Architecture" discloses hash value can be calculated by using strong one-way function.

M2 Presswire "The Development of Japan's First Electronic Bidding System Capable of Proving the Authenticity of a transaction to third parties; To be Adopted by Yokosuka City as First Electronic Bidding System in Japanese Local Governments" discloses an electronic bid system where the bidding price is automatically calculated into a hash value.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lynda Jasmin whose telephone number is (703) 305-0465 (after April 13th, (571) 272-6782). The examiner can normally be reached on Monday- Friday (8:00-5:30) alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert P Olszewski can be reached on (703) 308-5183. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Lynda Jasmin
Primary Examiner
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